1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

769 over China. The festival, calculated according to the
618 lunar calendar, usually falls about the beginning of April. The assembly of the clan is concerned with three matters: the veneration of ancestors, a great feast, and an assize at which all topics concerning the clan are open for discussion.

MONGUOR CEMETERIES

764 It is plain from the descriptions that have already been given that the burial customs of the Monguors in recent
● 172 times have been heavily overlaid with Chinese borrowings. There are, however, indications of more ancient customs. People told that in 1906, after very heavy rains, a wall near the village of Hsinyuanp'u on the spur of a mountain in the valley of Shat'ang collapsed and a big vaulted burial chamber was revealed. It had been built with very large bricks. It contained a coffin, which had rotted away, in which there was the skeleton of a man. His clothes had rotted, but the remains of a bow, arrows, and quiver were found. Before the coffin there lay the skeleton of a horse. The saddle had also rotted,

[P. 69-b]

1: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1954 AE9 Monguor AE9

764 but it could be seen that the materials of the saddle had included copper and iron. As this discovery was made
•172 six years before I arrived in the country, I was unable to gather more details from the local people, who were totally uninterested in archaeological discoveries. The bricks of the tomb were said to have been carried away and used by the villagers, and the place could no longer be identified.

We know from numerous archaeological excavations that such tombs were built by the Turkish and Mongol tribes of Inner Asia and Northern Mongolia from ancient down to medieval times. These tombs are related in design to the tombs of the ancient Chou kings in China in the first millennium B.C. They consist essentially of an excavated chamber, its walls shored up either with timber or, in China, with bricks, and a great tumulus heaped up over the grave.[56] In the grave were placed horses and sometimes wives and servants who had been sacrificed to be buried with the deceased. Does the horse-burial tomb in the Monguor country belong to this tradition? This question I cannot answer, as I was unable to inspect the tomb.

At present there exist only two ancestral burial mounds which, according to Monguor tradition, contain such burial chambers. One is that of the Ch'i clan in Nienpei built in the garden of the mansion, in which are buried the more recent ancestors of the Ch'i T'u-ssu, and the other that of the Lu clan in Liench'eng. For other clans, there are conflicting traditions. Some say that in former times a number of clans had similar ancestral mounds, but that they were destroyed by Muslims. This tradition is not supported by such evidence as the ruins of burial places of this kind; on the other hand, in all the oldest cemeteries there is merely a big mound over the grave of the founding ancestor, without burial chambers, and therefore graves with such chambers are not only exceptional but of late construction.

173 As for the valley in which the horse-burial was dis-
172 covered, it is said that it was once inhabited by the Li clan, which is of Shat'o Turkish origin. Near the place where the burial-chamber was found there are still the ruins of an old fortress which is said locally to have been built by the famous Li, Prince of Chin. Although it is quite probable that the Shat'o Turks once occupied this valley, it is certain that the famous Prince Li never lived there. It is possible that his name has been attached in folk tradition to some other once-famous Shat'o chief; but it does not seem likely that this chief, whoever he was, was a direct ancestor of the present clan, because the Li clan holds its assembly in the valley of Hanp'ingshan, five miles south of Hsining (*Annals* of Hsining, ch. 4, p. 3).

764 The Sanch'uan branch of the same clan, south of Nienpei, holds its diet at Hsiangt'ang, at the junction of the Tat'ung and Hsining Rivers. Here stands the most elaborate cemetery in the whole country. It seems to

[56] W. Radloff, *Aus Sibirien* 2: 121, Liepzig, 1893. [p. 70a]